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June 24, 2015

Dear U.S. State Department and UNESCO Creative Cities Selection Committee,

PEN American Center, founded in 1922 and based in New York City, works to advance literature, to defend free expression, and to foster international literary fellowship. The city of Seattle has demonstrated that it shares this mission. On behalf of PEN America, I strongly endorse Seattle's bid to join the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

Seattle is already a thriving city of literature with a clear commitment to the necessity of free expression and the international exchange of ideas. It represents both a geographical and cultural frontier on the forefront of creative global dialogue and free expression advocacy. The city celebrates literature with an ethos of inclusiveness; combining a deep appreciation of its literary heritage with a dedicated, forward-facing commitment to championing the voices of marginalized communities.

Seattle's strong enthusiasm for the UNESCO Creative Cities Network program and its many contributions to the advancement of creative expression qualify it for inclusion in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. Choosing Seattle to join the UNESCO Creative Cities Network as a City of Literature will strengthen the international writing community and contribute to the global conversation.

On behalf of PEN America, I endorse SCoL and urge you to approve the city's bid.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Nossel  
Executive Director, PEN American Center